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Bulgarian Agents Described as Ready to Do Moscow's Bidding

The following article was also reported and written by Mr. Gage.

A detailed profile of the Bulgarian state security service, the Durzhavna Sigurnost, compiled from extensive interviews with Western intelligence agents and Bulgarian defectors who have had close contacts with it, shows it in essence to be a subsidiary of the Soviet security service, the K.G.B.

According to Stefan Svirdlev, one of only three officers to defect from the security service, each of its seven departments is controlled by a K.G.B. adviser who reports directly to Moscow. He also said about 30-K.G.B. agents helped devise the programs and policies of the agency in the Bulgarian Ministry of Internal Affairs, to which the security agency belongs.

The security agency increased its services to the K.G.B. a decade ago when the Soviet agency decided to farm out its "wet affairs" — their term for clandestine violent operations abroad. This happened after the defection of a high K.G.B. official who had information that led Britain to expel 105 Russians. Since then the Russians' most effective and loyal agents have proved to be those in the Bulgarian agency.

According to Western intelligence agencies, the Bulgarian service includes 700 officers, half of whom are stationed abroad, 9,000 agents and twice that many informants. It is officially headed by the Minister of Internal Affairs, Dimitar I. Stoyanov, 54 years old, and its operations are directed by a First Deputy Minister, Grigor V. Shopov, 67.

7 Departments in Agency

The departments of the Bulgarian security agency are intelligence, which handles espionage abroad; counterintelligence, which monitors dissidents at home and exiles abroad; military counterintelligence, which monitors military operations of three of Bulgaria's neighbors, Greece, Turkey and Yugoslavia; the Department of Technical Support, whose responsibilities include jamming Radio Free Europe broadcasts; the Department of Security and Vigilance, which guards the leaders of the country; the Department of Propaganda, and the Department of Information and Analysis, which gathers statistics for Bulgaria's leaders in addition to the ones that are made public.

In addition to the employees of the security agency, virtually every Bulgarian

sent abroad in an official capacity is told that it is a condition of his assignment that he report to the agency anything useful that he learns and that he be ready to cooperate with agency in any way it requires, according to Vladimir Kostov. Mr. Kostov, 51, was a deputy president of the committee directing radio and television broadcasting in Bulgaria until he defected in Paris six years ago.

"He is obliged to report every person he meets, to collect any documents from official agencies and to report on the character and especially the weaknesses of the people he meets," Mr. Kostov said, referring to the Bulgarian who is sent abroad.

Kidnapping and Assassination

The agency pays particular attention to Bulgarian exiles and especially defectors, who may become targets of kidnapping or assassination attempts if they prove to be a thorn in the side of the Bulgarian Government.

One such defector was Boris Arsov, who fled from Bulgaria and lived in Denmark. A fervent anti-Communist, he published a paper attacking the Bulgarian Government and in 1974 disappeared from his apartment. Two months later Mr. Arsov was produced in the central criminal court in Sofia.

"Arsov was playing with fire," the Bulgarian Communist newspaper Otechestven Front said. "The timely intervention of the organs of state security put an end to this. The arm of justice is longer than the legs of the traitor." Mr. Arsov was sentenced to 15 years in prison in Sofia, and a year later he was found dead in his cell. The Government said he had committed suicide.

Mr. Kostov, once a noted television personality in Bulgaria until he defected and began working for Radio Free Europe, was the victim of an assassination attempt in August 1978. While leaving the Paris Metro with his wife, he felt a sharp pain in his back. He turned around and saw a man hurrying away. For three days Mr. Kostov suffered a high fever, but he survived.

A Death in London

Ten days later, another Bulgarian defector, Georgi I. Markov, one of the country's most prolific writers, went up the steps near Waterloo Bridge in London and felt a jab in his thigh. A man behind him apologized and dropped an umbrella. Mr. Markov died two days later.

He had angered the Bulgarian Government with weekly talks over Radio Free Europe describing the high life of the Communist Party's leaders based on his meetings with Todor Zhivkov, the Bulgarian leader.

After reading about Mr. Markov's death, Mr. Kostov had his back X-rayed. It turned out that Mr. Markov and Mr. Kostov had been shot with identical platinum pellets no bigger than a pinhead, each with four tiny holes that contained a very small amount of a highly toxic poison.

British scientists believe it was ricin, a derivative of the castor oil plant, and so potent that one ounce could kill 90,000 people. Western intelligence agencies have learned that the most extensive research on ricin is done in Czechoslovakia and Hungary.

Servitude to the Russians

Mr. Kostov said the reason he defected and began his broadcasts against the Bulgarian Government was that he was disturbed, as are a growing number of Bulgarians, by the continued servitude of his country to Moscow.

Mr. Svirdlev, the former officer in the Bulgarian security agency who is one of the highest placed Bulgarians to defect, now lives a furtive existence in Munich after joining in an unsuccessful putsch in 1971 and then fleeing to Greece. He described a number of attacks on defectors by the Bulgarian agency and said that he, like Mr. Kostov, became disillusioned because of Bulgaria's complete subordination to Moscow.

He described in detail the operations of the Bulgarian agency and added that, besides collecting intelligence abroad under the terms of the Warsaw Pact, the agency is also in charge of collecting military intelligence on Greece, Turkey and Yugoslavia.

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